

# LINCOLN vs. DARWIN:

## GET DARWIN OFF LINCOLN'S COATTAILS!!

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FROM A "RACE OF MASTERS" TO A "MASTER RACE":  
1948 TO 1848

Political analysis without historical context is all sail and no rudder. Much ink has been expended as of late in the efforts to enshrine Charles Darwin with abolitionist credentials equal to that of Abraham Lincoln's. The factoid that these two men were born on the same day, February 12, 1809, is leveraged to give this claim credibility. This fraudulently steals away credit from Lincoln, who took a bullet to the head for freeing the slaves, and transfers it by inference to an aristocrat whom remained in his plush abode throughout the conflict, and in truth, never lifted a finger for the cause.

Adrian Desmond's and James Moore's 2009 book, "Darwin's Sacred Cause," is by far the most famous of these works. So how do Desmond and Moore substantiate their claim? By their own admission, Desmond and Moore rely largely on what they call "cryptic marginalia," which may serve to document Charles Darwin's disdain for the "peculiar institution," but which Charles Darwin never proclaimed publicly. Aside from this, there are private comments in personal correspondence. Desmond and Moore also tell how Charles Darwin decorated his private garden with the famous anti-slavery medallion produced by his grandfather, whom actually was an abolitionist *par excellence*.

Yet, history, much like science, is guided by facts not by feel-good factoids. The implication that Darwin or his book, "The Origins of the Species" contributed to the abolitionist movement in equal measure to President Lincoln is simply unsupportable by the dry facts. A comparison to the books that did have an influence on the outcome of that pivotal conflict quickly reveals so. While the "Origin of Species" was published in England in 1859, it did not reach an American audience until 1860, and then only a relatively miniscule one. Even in Europe, a relatively paltry 1,250 copies were printed. Desmond and Moore admit to the humble sales volume of "Origins" in one of their previous books. Their 1991 book, "Darwin" states that sales of "Origins" were limited to 60 to 250 per month. Appleton's of New York, got a reported 2,500 books of the American edition out in mid-January 1860.

Furthermore, it must be noted that 1860 was hardly a good year to try to capture public attention in the United States. Within days of the American release of "Origins", Lincoln would give his famous Cooper Union speech. More to the point, it must be remembered that Lincoln edited the texts of all his famous debates and had them published in a book. Lincoln's book was published in 1860, the same year as the American release of "Origins". Follett, Foster, and Company published Lincoln's book under the title "Political Debates Between Hon. Abraham Lincoln and Hon. Stephen A. Douglas in the Celebrated Campaign of 1858 in Illinois." Lincoln literally rode a political bestseller to the White House. The online journal "The Rail Splitter" published the article "A Journal for the Lincoln Collector" documents the demand of Abraham Lincoln's book:

While Follett Foster was one of the larger publishing firms in the nation, they were caught off guard at the popularity of the "Debates." Their presses ran twenty-four hours a day, and finished pages were farmed-out to other binderies throughout the Midwest to keep up with the demand. In the end, the Debates ran through seven editions and sold more than 100,000 copies-almost unheard of for a political publication.

Clearly there is no comparison; Lincoln's book sold nearly 60-fold more copies than Darwin's book, and Darwin's book did not sell in anywhere near an amount necessary to make an impact in the vast American population.

Darwin must also be judged against other influential writers of the time. To put these figures into perspective, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" sold 300,000 copies in the U.S., and another 1,000,000.00 copies were sold in Great Britain. Karl Marx's incredibly influential "*Das Kapital*," was published at this point in history as well.

Incidentally, Marx was working as a war correspondent covering the American Civil War. Horace Greeley, the radical, anti-slavery editor of the New York Daily Tribune hired Marx as the paper's London Correspondent. Unlike Darwin, Marx did not shy away from making his views on slavery public. Marx had already been kicked out of several countries for his radical views, and did not shy away from siding with the Union while most in England sided with the aristocratic South.

In fact, one slightly forgotten episode in the history of the American Civil War is that Karl Marx wrote a

letter to President Abraham Lincoln. The letter was presented to U.S. Ambassador Charles Francis Adams on January 28, 1865:

Sir: We congratulate the American people upon your re-election by a large majority. If resistance to the Slave Power was the reserved watchword of your first election, the triumphant war cry of your re-election is Death to Slavery. (Pg. 688, "From a 'Race of Masters' to a 'Master Race': 1948 to 1848")

Curiously enough, neither Marx nor Engels had a very high opinion of Darwin. However, their opinion sheds light on Darwin's alleged abolitionist credentials, as both Marx and Engels felt that Darwin was projecting his personal and political prejudices onto his scientific work. Author Ronald E. Meek provides a thorough account of Marx's views on Darwin in his 1971 book, "Marx and Engels on the Population Bomb":

Herr Lange, you see, has made a great discovery. The whole of history can be brought under a single great natural law. This natural law is the phrase (in this application Darwin's expression becomes nothing but a phrase) "the struggle for existence," and the content of this phrase is the Malthusian law of population or, rather, overpopulation. So, instead of analyzing the struggle for existence as represented historically in varying and definite forms of society, all that has to be done is to translate every concrete struggle into the phrase, "struggle for existence," and this phrase itself into the Malthusian population fantasy. One must admit that this is a very impressive method – for **swaggering, sham-scientific, bombastic ignorance and intellectual laziness.** - From Marx's letter to Kugelmann of June 27, 1870. (Pg. 196 – Meeks, emphasis mine)

Both Marx and Engels thought that Darwin's work relied too heavily on Malthus, a work they considered to be deceitful, political, and a work of "plagiarism":

It is remarkable that Darwin recognizes among brutes and plants his English society with its division of labor, competition, opening up of new markets, "inventions," and Malthusian "struggle for existence." It is Hobbes's *bellum omnium contra omnes*, and it is reminiscent of Hegel in the *Phenomenology*, where bourgeois

society figures as "spiritual animal kingdom," while the Darwin the animal kingdom figures as bourgeois society." From Marx's letter to Engels of June 18, 1862 (Pg. 195 – Meeks)

In this respect, Marx and Engels were perfectly correct. Charles Darwin and his entourage of British gents certainly did superimpose political and racial "hierarchies" upon nature, and in the long run, gave rise to what we now call "scientific racism". In 2006 Jonathan Marks published an article titled "The Scientific and Cultural Meaning of the Odious Ape-Human Comparison." As Jonathan Marks points out, Charles Lyell, Charles Darwin, and Thomas H. Huxley were all abolitionists, yet their views also served to devalue the "coloured races". Jonathan Marks Charles Lyell in his 1873 "The Antiquity of Man":

The average Negro skull differs from that of the European . . . in all which points an approach is made to the simian type.

Consider the 1865 essay by Thomas H. Huxley, the man otherwise known as "Darwin's Bulldog":

It may be quite true that some negroes are better than some white men; but no rational man, cognizant of the facts, believes that the average negro is the equal, still less the superior, of the average white man. (Huxley, T.H., *Emancipation: Black and White, In Man's Place in Nature, and Other Anthropological Essays*, New York, 1865, Pgs. 17-18)

Huxley was the first academic to openly proclaim humanity's ape-like ancestry. The similarity of people to apes was the cornerstone of "Man's Place in Nature", written by Huxley in 1863 at the peak of the American Civil War. Marks comments on Huxley's writings:

The nonwhite races embodied in connection between Europeans and the apes. The invocation of primates as a tool for dehumanizing outsiders ---- was simply transferred to an evolutionary discourse and thereby given exaggerated validity as science; prerevolutionary images associating apes and "lesser races" were now simply **vested with the authority of Darwinism.** (emphasis mine, Pg. 660, "From a 'Race of Masters'")

Charles Darwin followed up "Origins of the Species"

with “The Descent of Man”. “Descent” was very much the second part of “Origins”, as “Origins” intentionally avoided the topic of mankind’s place in nature, or more specifically, it did not extrapolate how Darwin’s theory applied to humanity. We must remember that Charles Darwin lacked the fossil evidence necessary to empirically prove the evolutionary hierarchy he proposed between apes and man. Yet, Charles Darwin did not embark on proposing a half-finished theory. Darwin intended to present a complete and all-encompassing theory, which included humanity, and filled the blanks he intentionally left behind with “Origins” by publishing “The Descent of Man”. In order to close the gaping hole between humanity as a lower form of animal life and the human species in its evolved form, Charles Darwin proposed that the “higher apes” were the earlier forms, and Africans and Aborigine “savages” were the transition between “apes” and the highly evolved White Anglo Saxon men like himself:

The sole object of this work is to consider, firstly, whether man, like every other species, is descended from some pre-existing form; secondly, the manner of his development; and thirdly, **the value of the differences between the so-called races of man.**” (Pg. xx, “The Descent of Man”, emphasis mine)

While the Huxley-Lyell team has been highly touted by historians, Darwin has a second entourage that is not as popularly recognized. In order to address humanity’s place in “Descent”, Darwin adopted and incorporated the work of his cousin Francis Galton and friend Ernst Haeckel. Haeckel certainly doesn’t help Darwin’s alleged abolitionist credentials. Known as ‘Darwin’s Bulldog on the Continent’ and ‘the Huxley of Germany’, Ernst Heinrich Philipp August Haeckel is notorious as the scientist whose “scientific racism” inspired Hitler’s henchmen.

Haeckel was also the first person to draw an evolutionary ‘family tree’ for mankind. Haeckel’s “anthropods” illustration in the German edition of his 1868 book, “The History of Creation” is the graphic depiction of Darwin’s racist hierarchy, with the ape slowly morphing into an “Aryan,” passing through the Aborigine and African intermediaries depicted as being more ape-like than their Caucasian counterparts.

This is hardly ‘guilt-by-association’ as some may claim; Haeckel’s pedigree illustrations of vertebrates morphing from one evolutionary step to another not only

served to popularize Darwinism in Germany, but to inform Charles Darwin’s own work on the subsequent publication of “Descent.” Darwin fully defers to Haeckel in the introduction to “Descent,” acknowledging Haeckel’s extrapolations as the source of many of the theories in “Descent”:

This last naturalist, beside his great work, *Generelle Morphologie* (1866), has recently (1868, with a second edit. in 1870) published his *Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte*, in which he fully discusses the genealogy of man. If this work had appeared before my essay had been written, I should probably never have completed it. (Pgs. xx – xxi, “The Descent of Man”)

Francis Galton’s eugenics had directly evolved from Darwin’s work. “Hereditary Genius” was first published by Francis Galton in 1869. Galton continued with his observations on how Darwin’s “natural selection” could be harnessed for human breeding by engaging in “rational” or “scientific” form of “selection,” namely in his 1874 “English Men of Science,” his 1883 “Human Faculty,” and his 1889 “Natural Inheritance.” While many apologize for Galton with the false claim that Galton’s work was free of the racism typical of the German eugenicists, the truth is that Galton’s work was saturated with racially-charged observations from the onset:

The remainder of the volume is taken up with topics that are suggested by the results of the former portion, such as **the comparative worth of different races.** ... There is nothing either in the history of domestic animals or in that of evolution to make us doubt that a race of sane men may be formed who shall be as much superior mentally and morally to the modern European, as the modern European is to the lowest of the Negro races. (Pg. x, “Hereditary Genius”, emphasis mine)

And again:

In short, classes E and F of the negro may roughly be considered as the equivalent of our C and D—a result which again points to the conclusion, that the average intellectual standard of the negro race is some two grades below our own. (Pg. 338, “Hereditary Genius”)

Galton’s own words evidence the “racism” inherent

in his perverse desire for a eugenic utopia based on an “artificial selection” of the “races” deemed more “fit”, and the elimination of those deemed “unfit”:

Fourthly, the number among the negroes of those whom we should call half-witted men, is very large. Every book alluding to negro servants in America is full of instances. I was myself much impressed by this fact during my travels in Africa. The mistakes the negroes made in their own matters, were so childish, stupid, and simpleton-like. (Pg. 339, “Hereditary Genius”)

Galton’s eugenic science is now universally reviled after Adolf Hitler made eugenic selection state policy in Nazi Germany. Yet, Darwinists claim that Darwin was misinterpreted by the eugenicists that followed, and that eugenics was the work of crackpots. This is highly suspect, as two of Darwin’s sons dedicated their careers to eugenics, and the men whom implemented and oversaw Hitler’s eugenic experiment were amongst the most respected Darwinists of their time.

This was hardly a issue up for debate for several generations of the Darwin-Galton family. According to Darwin’s own sons, Charles Darwin not just approved of Francis Galton’s eugenics but supported Leonard Darwin’s furthering of the eugenic cause at an international scale. Francis Darwin was Charles Darwin’s third son and a botanist like his father. Francis Darwin gave the first “Galton Lecture” before the Eugenics Education Society on February 16, 1914. Francis Darwin documents that it was Charles Darwin’s approval that gave Galton the encouragement to keep going with the cause of eugenics. Most importantly, Francis Darwin documents that it was Charles Darwin whom gave Galton’s work the greatest impetus by incorporating and citing Galton’s work into his publication of “Descent”:

Galton was encouraged and reassured by Darwin’s appreciation of his work: his words in *Hereditary Genius* are “I feel assured that, inasmuch as what I then wrote was sufficient to earn the acceptance of Mr. Darwin”. (Francis Darwin, “Galton Lecture”)

In this lecture, Francis Darwin stated it succinctly and accurately: **“Origin was the fuse”**, making a direct reference to Charles Darwin’s famous book. To be clear; the opinion of Francis Darwin is not just the opinion of an otherwise uninformed son writing proudly about his

father. Francis Darwin had extensive insider knowledge on the work of Charles Darwin and Francis Galton. Aside from being a recipient of the “Darwin Medal”, Francis Darwin edited “The Autobiography of Charles Darwin” (1887), and produced some books of letters from the correspondence of Charles Darwin including “The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin” (1887), “More Letters of Charles Darwin” (1905). He also edited Thomas Huxley’s “On the Reception of the Origin of Species” (1887).

Charles Darwin’s other son certainly had expert insider knowledge on the history of eugenics as it pertained to his family. Leonard Darwin is nothing less than the leader of the international eugenics movement, and was a central figure in the I.F.E.O.. Leonard Darwin’s 1926 book “The Need for Eugenic Reform” is dedicated to the memory of his father, and the dedication clarifies Charles Darwin’s approval:

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
**MY FATHER**

FOR IF I HAD NOT BELIEVED THAT HE  
WOULD HAVE WISHED ME TO GIVE SUCH  
HELP AS I COULD TOWARDS MAKING HIS  
LIFE’S WORK OF SERVICE TO MANKIND,  
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN LED TO  
WRITE THIS BOOK.

In “The Need for Eugenic Reform,” he cites Charles B. Davenport, Harry H. Laughlin, Karl Pearson, Francis Galton, and most importantly, his father, Charles Darwin. Leonard Darwin again confirms this position in a letter to Karl Pearson dated January 14, 1914:

I should chuck most of it but for a sense of duty and a belief that my Father would have liked me to do what little in me lies as regards Eugenics. (EUGENICS ARCHIVE, ITEM No.: 12049 -- Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory’s -- Dolan DNA Learning Center)

Contemporary Darwinist zealots bitterly contest the observation that Darwin’s work led to the eugenics of The Holocaust. Yet it is Darwin’s own sons that betray this feeble defense. The American eugenics movement was born when Charles B. Davenport visited Francis Galton in order to gain support for the creation of the aptly named “Station for the Experimental Study of Evolution” in Cold Spring Harbor, New York. This station would become the epicenter of American eugenics

and also house the Eugenics Records Office where Davenport and his minion, Harry H. Laughlin, drafted the various pieces of eugenic legislation adopted by several States in the Union, the U.S. Congress, and later by Hitler's government. Laughlin and Davenport were indispensable towards the passing of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act that kept so many Jewish refugees from reaching the safety of U.S. shores during The Holocaust. This 1924 Act was justified by Laughlin's "scientific work" which was purely eugenic in nature. Laughlin's "Model Eugenic Law" would also be adopted by the likes of Alfred Ploetz and Ernst Rüdin when drafting the infamous Nuremberg eugenic laws that paved the way to The Holocaust.

Harry H. Laughlin and Charles B. Davenport certainly understood where their dogma originated. A lecture given by Laughlin to the American Eugenics Society on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1928 makes this point amply clear:

American eugenicists, led by Davenport, are developing studies along the lines laid down by Charles Darwin and Sir Francis Galton. (Pg. 1, "The Progress of American Eugenics")

All of these men came together under an organization named the International Federation of Eugenic Organizations, which was headed by Leonard Darwin, Charles B. Davenport, Alfred Ploetz, and Ernst Rüdin. It is through the I.F.E.O. which American legislation and Laughlin's "Model Eugenic Law" would become the basis for Hitler's Nuremberg laws.

Professor Garland E. Allen, of the Department of Biology from Washington University in St. Louis wrote an article included in "Scientific Controversies: case studies in the resolution and closure of disputes in science and technology" distributed by Cambridge University Press in 1987. In it Professor Allen provides what any serious historian of the eugenics movement knows to be true about the men responsible for the scientific movement that led to The Holocaust:

All were Darwinians but derived their eugenical ideas and inspiration from Francis Galton rather than from the social Darwinists of the preceding generation (indeed, both Davenport and Pearl had actually spent approximately six months each with Galton and his disciple Karl Pearson at University College in London.) (Pg. 187, "The Role of Experts in Scientific Controversy")

This is an important observation to make, as prior to Francis Galton, Leonard Darwin, Alfred Ploetz, and Charles B. Davenport, eugenics was largely the object of ridicule supported only by radicals and socialists like Victoria Woodhull and the various socialist utopias in the United States like Oneida Colony. The turn around in respectability came precisely because people like Leonard Darwin and Francis Galton leant their name to the movement, at all times leveraging Charles Darwin's fame in order to do so. The legitimacy of the now discredited eugenics movement was literally purchased with the currency of Darwin's fame.

Returning to the topic of Darwin's alleged abolitionist credentials, historians must recognize that "The Descent of Man" had a much deeper and lasting impact than "Origins" ever did. Charles Darwin's name and prestige had been established by 1871. Within three weeks of publication, a reprint of "Descent" had been ordered, and 4,500 copies were in print by the end of March 1871. Historically speaking, Darwin could not have chosen a worst time to publish the concepts contained in "The Descent of Man." The infamous caricature of Darwin with an ape body was widely distributed in the United States in 1871 following publication of "Descent of Man." Darwin's characterization of the "colored" and "savage" race being closer to apes than to white men became the scientific justification for Jim Crow segregation in the American South. This observation was made by Robert C. Bannister in his 1989 book "Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought":

Although ideas of racial inferiority antedated the *Origin of Species*, modern racism like eugenics appeared on the surface to be a direct legacy of Darwin's work. Darwin, after all, subtitled his masterpiece "The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life." In *The Descent of Man* he predicted, "At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world." His co-evolutionists Huxley, Wallace, and Spencer repeatedly contrasted the "lower" and "higher" races to the advantage of the latter. By the 1890s images of racial struggle spawned speculation concerning the ultimate demise of all blacks in the New World and, at the other extreme, a program of rigid segregation of the

racism through Jim Crow legislation. (Pg. 180, "Social Darwinism", emphasis mine)

Even Stephen Jay Gould, the crowned champion of contemporary evolutionary science, concede this aspect of history:

Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory. (Pg. 127, "Ontogeny and Phylogeny")

Etymology, the technical term for word history, helps illustrate this fact. According to the word history, what we now regard as "racism" was born out of Darwin's "racialist" views. The etymology of "racism" and "racialism" clarifies that while the term "race" is much older than Darwinism, the consecration of the concept into the realm of science is dated to precisely the publication date of "Descent." The Online Etymology Dictionary documents this aspect of history:

**RACIST:** *racism* is first attested 1936 (from Fr. *racisme*, 1935), originally in the context of Nazi theories. But they replaced earlier words, ***racialism*** (1871) and *racialist* (1917). (www.etymonline.com)

A March 13, 2007, article at the BBC News webpage asked John Simpson, editor of the "Oxford English Dictionary Online" if the terms "racialism" and "racism" meant the same thing:

Yes, says John Simpson. --- They didn't start out that way, but they are now considered one in the same. Racialism and racialist are older terms, dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. When the words were first used in the early 1900s, they loosely referred to semi-anthropological theories about biological differences among races. It was a way that people tried to legitimise racist beliefs and practices. (March 13, 2007, "BBC News")

If anything, the etymology provides the historical context that debunks Desmond's and Moore's claim; Charles Darwin's work helped worsen race relations by providing the ideological basis for "scientific racism". As such, Jonathan Marks argues that Darwin's "Descent of Man" served only to legitimize the "racism" of the era:

What is not controversial is the fact that

Darwin himself was heavily influenced by the anthropology of his time. It is for this very reason that *Descent of Man* (1871) has been criticized as a largely unoriginal work reiterating many of the social Darwinist theories that were in their turn, further elaborated upon, expanded and legitimated with the theoretical possibilities natural selection opened up. (Pg. 662, "From a 'Race of Masters'")

Furthermore, the retrospective observation that Darwin's "common origins" ultimately debunked the "polygenesis" pro-Slavery argument is the other justification given for the Darwinist historical analysis. This too is a view that must be viewed with some skepticism. Darwin himself never pretended that he was the originator of the scientific version of the "common descent" theory that Darwinist claim "united humanity." The introduction to "The Descent of Man" explicitly says so:

**This work contains hardly any original facts in regard to man;** but as the conclusions at which I arrived, after drawing up a rough draught, appeared to me interesting, I thought that they might interest others. – **The conclusion that man is the co-descendant with other species of some ancient, lower, and extinct form, is not in any degree new.** (Pgs. xx – xxi, "The Descent of Man", emphasis mine)

Whether Darwin's defenders want to acknowledge it or not, the "common descent" theory as in respect to its effects on the abolition argument, originates with the Old Testament, and not Darwin. The Old Testament had firmly implanted in the minds of Americans the idea that humans were part of one large family, and it is only the various hypothesis of the scientific revolution which shed doubt on these views. This is especially true if one accepts the view of history that champions Darwin for freeing the human intellect from the tight grip the Church previously had on it.

In hindsight, it seems somewhat of an insult to claim that Charles Darwin lived up to the legacy of his grandparent's activist credentials. We must remember that Charles Darwin had ample opportunity to involve himself personally in the cause of abolition, or to at the very least adopt the values that his grandparents had

fought hard for. The most important contribution by the Darwin-Wedgwood-Galton family to abolition was through Josiah Wedgwood, whom produced thousands of cameos with the now famous image of the black man which would be married with the slogan “Am I Not a Man? And a Brother?” This is the cameo that Darwin placed in his garden according to Desmond and Moore.

This cameo also represents how the famous friendship between Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgwood was forged into the abolitionist powerhouse that it became. Erasmus was a true radical and revolutionary. Erasmus approved of the American Revolution, and also welcomed the French Revolution that commenced in July 1789. According to Christopher Upham, Murray Smith, and Robert Arnott, authors of “The Genius of Erasmus Darwin”. In 1788, with Josiah Wedgwood (1730-95), his closest friend, Darwin argued against slavery. In April 1789, the first great discussion in the House of Commons on the abolition of this trade was expected.

Darwin asked that the cry of the enslaved should be heard: “Hear him, ye Senates! Hear this truth sublime. He who allows oppression shares the crime.” (Pg 73, “The Genius of Erasmus Darwin”)

The story of Erasmus and Josiah has to be gauged against the all-too-common defense that Charles Darwin’s racism was typical of his time. The reality is that Charles Darwin reversed an otherwise stellar history of humanism and egalitarian values that his family had exemplified. More to the point, Darwin had access to the equivalent of Abraham Lincoln in Britain: Thomas Clarkson was an English abolitionist, and a leading campaigner against the slave trade in the British Empire. He helped found The Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade and helped achieve passage of the Slave Trade Act of 1807, which ended British trade in slaves. Clarkson’s work was the basis by which the British Parliament abolished slavery.

As far as British abolitionism goes, Darwin’s “Origins” was nearly a century too late to have an impact in the British movement. In 1789 Clarkson published “An Essay on the Slave Trade”. In 1788 Clarkson published his “Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade,” which was printed in large numbers. Together, these works provided a firm basis for William Wilberforce’s first abolitionist speech in the House of Commons on 12 May 1789, and its twelve propositions, which ultimately led to

the abolition of slavery in the United Kingdom.

To be precise, Clarkson dedicated his life to proving exactly the opposite of the racial hierarchies Darwin expounded in “The Descent of Man”. Thomas Clarkson spent two years travelling around England gathering evidence. He interviewed 20,000 sailors during his research. All in all Thomas Clarkson rode by horseback some 35,000 miles for evidence. He also enlisted the help of Alexander Falconbridge and James Arnold, two ship’s surgeons whom he met in Liverpool. They had been on many voyages aboard slave ships, and were able to recount their experiences in detail for publication. Here is a quote from Clarkson that is interesting, as it takes the mirror opposite position from that of Charles Darwin and Francis Galton:

How then shall I begin? Shall I enumerate the many instances of fidelity, patience, or valour, that are recorded of the servile race? Shall I enumerate the many important services, that they rendered both to the individuals and the community, under whom they lived? Here would be a second source, from whence I could collect sufficient materials to shew, that there is no inferiority in their nature. But I decline to use them. I shall content myself with some few instances, that relate to the genius only: I shall mention the names of those of a servile condition, whose writings, having escaped the wreck of time, and having been handed down even to the present age, are now to be seen, as so many living monuments, that neither Grecian, nor Roman genius, was superior to their own. The first, whom I shall mention here, is the famous Aesop. (Pg. 14, “An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce”)

It is only fair to note that Darwin could have accessed Clarkson, if he really had the conviction to end slavery that Desmond and Moore attribute to him. He didn’t. Clarkson died in 1846, with his life and work overlapping with Charles Darwin for nearly 40 years. Certainly, the various racially charged and denigrating passages in both “Origins” and “Descent” go far to evidence the distance between Clarkson and Darwin. The words printed in “Origins” and “Descent” are the words Darwin chose to commit to permanence, and they are diametrically opposed to those of Erasmus Darwin, Josiah Wedgwood, and Thomas Clarkson.

To the contrary, Charles Darwin set out to rank the

“races” of mankind in order to illustrate the evolutionary stepladder between apes and Anglo Saxon Britons. He did so precisely by explicitly denigrating and lowering the racial worth of Aborigines, Africans, and namely the South American Fuegians the voyage in the Beagle brought him in close contact with. Consider Charles Darwin’s descriptions of the Fuegians and contrast them to Thomas Clarkson’s view of other ethnicities. Darwin’s December 1832 entry into the “Tierra del Fuego” section of his diary demonstrates that he was clearly intent on seeing the Fuegians as proof of a middle-step between apes and “civilized” Europeans from the onset:

I would not have believed how entire the difference between savage & civilized man is.— It is greater than between a wild & domesticated animal. (Pg 122, Keynes, R. D. ed. 2001. “Charles Darwin’s Beagle Diary”)

Marx and Engels thus are correct in stating that Darwin forced his prejudiced upon nature in order to prove his theory. In his famous diary, Darwin continually referred to them as “hideous”, “filthy”, “savages” and continually compared them to “monkeys” and other “creatures”.

It is of note that Charles Darwin relied on hearsay to come to the conclusion that these Fuegians were “cannibals”, In fact, Darwin completely misjudged the richness of the Fuegian language, comparing it to the grunts of animals, and completely misunderstanding its true depth and breadth, only to have these observations disproven by the missionary, Thomas Bridges, whom actually took the time to learn the language and get to know the Fuegians. Darwin’s own supporters find these passages hard to read:

It is always a bit uncomfortable to hear Darwin compare “savages” with “civilized men”, so I find that I have to remind myself that this was a different time, and although it not appropriate today, it is a part of history. This European viewpoint certainly was part of who Darwin was and how he thought about the world. (Rob Viens, Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, “The Beagle Project” – Reflections on Darwin’s Voyage of Discovery)

The above quote by Rob Viens is the standard apology for Darwin’s racism; that it was typical of Europeans of the era. Yet, as we have seen, it would be unjust to say that Erasmus Darwin, Josiah Wedgwood, or Thomas Clarkson shared these sentiments. In fact, this

was not even the view of other European explorers that visited Tierra del Fuego at the time, and some even made it a point to disagree with Charles Darwin. Darwin’s fellow Briton, William Parker Snow, visited Tierra del Fuego in 1855:

Another thing I noticed was that many of the Fuegians on the Eastern Island were fine and some of them even handsome fellows. This I know to be rather different to what Mr. Darwin says of them: but I can only speak as I found, and thus mention what I myself saw. My own opinion was that the Fuegian is a creature of circumstance. ---- The actual difference between a savage and a civilized man is simply the degree of cultivation given to the mind. In all other respects the savage at home is identical with the savage abroad. ---- In speaking of these savages, I cannot help saying that I do not consider them so degraded as many persons do. I look from effect to cause, and thus trace their present condition to the nature of circumstances. (Pgs. 264-267, “Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London”, Volume 1, 1861)

As for comparing the courage of President Lincoln to Darwin, it can’t even be said that Darwin had been courageous about his own work. He was meek even about committing his scientific convictions to ink until Wallace pushed him off the proverbial diving board. No one can claim that Abraham Lincoln squirmed in the face of personal repercussions as Charles Darwin did.

Men will mince Lincoln’s words. Many historians have documented the “marginalia” in which Lincoln expresses doubt about the equality of the slave to the white population. The fact that Lincoln scribbled doubts like Darwin only serves to reinforce the notion that Darwin was Lincoln’s mirror opposite, not his equal. It is precisely because Abraham Lincoln recognized that he was a frail and imperfect man, that we must regard Lincoln’s works, namely the Emancipation Proclamation and the amendments to the Constitution credited to him, as exemplifying the humanitarianism that is now unjustly attributed to Darwin. Lincoln admitted his own personal prejudices, but adamantly asserted that regardless of origin, all are “created equal,” with “equal opportunity to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”. To him, personal prejudices were beneath the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. That is precisely what



the founding documents were designed to do: transcend personal prejudices and contemporary banalities. Lincoln understood this, and willingly gave his life for the cause.

Lincoln knew that a war of secession would make these original documents “perish from this earth,” as explicitly stated in his Gettysburg Address. This is also where Abraham Lincoln dug in his heels. Lincoln understood that if the U.S. Constitution was altered or interpreted to allow for slavery, that everything that the Founding Fathers had gained for humanity would be lost:

Don't interfere with anything in the Constitution. That must be maintained, for it is the only safeguard of our liberties. And not to Democrats alone do I make this appeal, but to all who love these great and true principles. (Abraham Lincoln, August 27, 1856, Speech at Kalamazoo, Michigan)

It will take longer than the 20th century, and maybe even the 21st century, to comprehend the depth and breadth of President Lincoln's fears, that the best and last hope towards human liberty not “perish from the earth.” At issue was much more than the liberty of four million humans. At issue was the “liberty” of everyone whom would live under the U.S. Constitution thereafter.

It is not merely for to-day, but for all time to come that we should perpetuate for our children's children this great and free government, which we have enjoyed all our lives. (Abraham Lincoln, August 22, 1864 Speech to the One Hundred Sixty-sixth Ohio Regiment)

This is a message that President Abraham Lincoln insisted on repeating when speaking to the Union servicemen:

In this great struggle, this form of Government and every form of human right is endangered if our enemies succeed. There is more involved in this contest than is realized by every one. (Abraham Lincoln, August 18, 1864 Speech to the 164 Ohio Regiment)

All in all, the story told by Desmond and Moore is most accurately described as

the story of how Darwin betrayed the otherwise illustrious legacy of humanism, egalitarianism, and activism for the cause of abolition the Darwin-Wedgwood family otherwise exemplified. While Lincoln's legacy is the defense of civil liberties for over a century after him, Darwin's legacy is that of “scientific racism” and eugenics. A more accurate depiction of the relationship between Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln is that of two ships passing each other in the night, each going in opposite directions. Desmond and Moore rob Lincoln to canonize Darwin.

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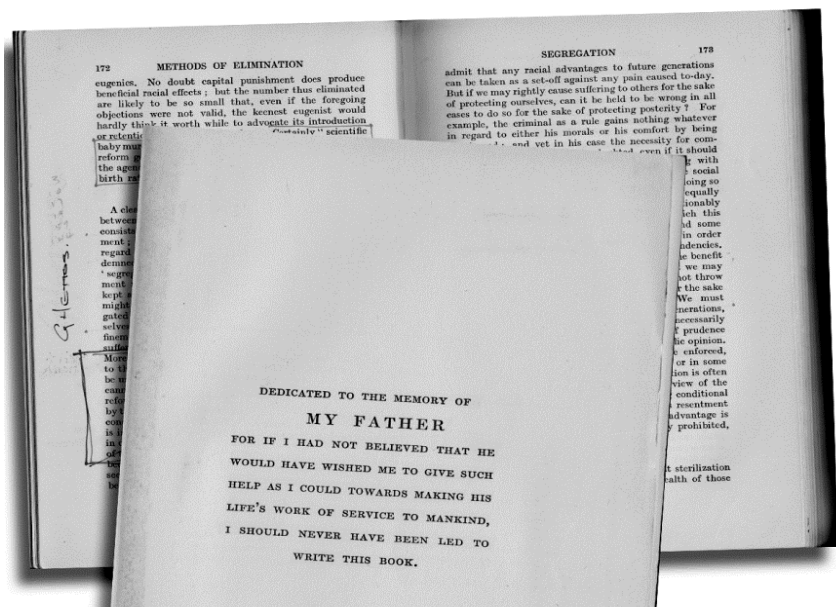
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Scan of the dedication page to Leonard Darwin's 1926 book, "The Need for Eugenic Reform" confirming that Charles Darwin approved of Leonard's work on eugenics. The background scan displays the chapter in the book entitled "Methods of Elimination" and "Segregation". The book was distributed as part of several international congresses on eugenics and population control.